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Flow
Of Drugs—
A Losing Battle

U.S. News[®]

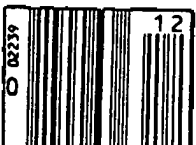
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& WORLD REPORT



GORBACHEV'S
KREMLIN

What
Now?



Washington

WHISPERS

Odds on a Reagan-Gorbachev Summit . . .

How to Get Donald Regan's Goat . . .

A Bush-Cuomo Race in '88? . . .

A Reagan-Gorbachev summit soon? Definitely not. White House aides predict it will be months before the new Soviet leader feels secure enough to take up the President's open invitation. No chance is seen for a get-together during Reagan's trip to the economic summit in Germany in May. What about at convening of the United Nations General Assembly in September? Maybe.

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Some U.S. experts say that the Kremlin's new leader, although a peppy 54, is not as robust as he looks and may suffer from high blood pressure and diabetes.

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What did Vice President Bush talk about with world leaders during his visit to Moscow for Chernenko's funeral? With Britain's Thatcher, it was her impression of Gorbachev; with Japan's Nakasone, trade problems; with West Germany's Kohl, the renewed arms talks; with India's Gandhi, his trip to the United States in June, and with Pakistan's Zia, the war in Afghanistan.

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Vice President Bush and New York's Governor Mario Cuomo will compete for the Presidency in 1988—if aides to House members know their politics. A poll of the assistants showed Bush outdistancing Representative Jack Kemp of New York for the Republican nomination and Cuomo with a healthy margin over Senator Gary Hart of Colorado among Democrats.

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What's the fastest way to aggravate Donald Regan, the new White House chief of staff? Just hint that the former Treasury Secretary and Wall Street executive is more naïve about Washington politics than predecessor James Baker.

About those threats by White House aides that the President won't campaign next year for Republican members of Congress who do not back him on key issues: Not so. The reassuring word from on high is that Reagan will aid any Republican incumbent who needs help in 1986.

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Why did Fidel Castro skip Chernenko's funeral? Those who know the Cuban leader best give two reasons: The haughty Castro didn't want to play second fiddle to leaders of bigger powers in Moscow, and he was trying to show that he's not a puppet of the Kremlin as the U.S. always charges.

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Clarence Pendleton, despite a supportive telephone call from the President, is being urged by senior White House officials to cool his feud with black leaders. The chairman of the Civil Rights Commission, who is black, was told that more angry words would only hurt both the administration and minorities.

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Opponents of the MX missile are staging a tactical retreat in Congress. Foreseeing that Reagan is gaining the votes he needs to authorize production of an additional 21 weapons, they are mapping plans for a make-or-break stand next autumn on the third and final segment that would bring the program up to its full 100-missile strength.

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Reagan is about to be handed a hot potato involving 25 Americans helping build a nuclear-power plant in South Africa. State Department officials—sensitive to protests against South Africa's racial policies—are pressing the Energy Department to deny special work permits to the Americans, and Energy is throwing the whole thing in the President's lap.

Three ways to slash military spending being mulled over in Congress: Force the Pentagon to choose which new weapons systems to buy, stretch out programs over a longer period, and cut noncombat personnel and costly top-ranking officers who lead them.

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A surcharge on imports is growing steadily more popular in Congress as the safest way out of the deficit crunch. Backers say it would raise tens of billions of dollars a year in fresh revenue, please businesses and unions and put the squeeze on Japan to ease barriers against U.S. goods.

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Republicans see a chance to upset a pair of Democratic senators as well as pick up opposition seats being vacated next year in Louisiana, Missouri and perhaps Colorado. They insist that incumbents Alan Cranston of California and Patrick Leahy of Vermont are vulnerable.

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The House of Representatives may be headed for one of its biggest turn-overs in years. More than 50 lawmakers already are considering quitting or seeking other offices in 1986, compared with the 22 members who dropped out in 1984.

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For the first time, U.S. military officers in the Philippines are seriously talking of giving up Clark Air Base and the Subic Bay Naval Base. They warn that unless President Marcos stabilizes the nation quickly, the U.S. had better look for alternatives, such as Guam. The lease for Philippine facilities runs out in 1991.

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Congressional investigators have uncovered one reason the Pentagon keeps needing more money. When Navy brass ran out of funds to produce a new fighter plane, they simply took 310 million dollars earmarked for the plane's support equipment and used it to pay for the aircraft itself—then asked lawmakers to replace that money without ever admitting the cost overrun.